

Balnaves

Balnaves Cabernet Sauvignon is a refined, age-worthy expression from Coonawarra, presenting layers of black fruit, fine tannins, and a touch of oak. The wine reflects the dedication and tradition of Balnaves' winemaking, delivering structure and depth.

Cabernet Sauvignon 2018

Coonawarra, Australia

96
James Halliday



Alcohol :14,50 %

Composition: 100% Cabernet Sauvignon

Region and Vineyards

The **Coonawarra region** in South Australia is renowned for its ideal conditions for Cabernet Sauvignon, thanks in part to its famous **terra rossa soil**. This thin, iron-rich red soil sits atop a limestone base, offering excellent drainage and supporting concentrated, mineral-driven wines. Coonawarra's proximity to the Southern Ocean moderates the climate, allowing for a long ripening season that encourages both flavor development and fresh acidity in the grapes. The combination of these factors results in structured, balanced wines with a strong sense of place.

The **growing season** in Coonawarra saw replenishing winter rains, followed by a warm, dry autumn that allowed the fruit to reach optimal phenolic ripeness with complex flavor profiles. Balnaves' meticulous vineyard management extends across select blocks—Old Paulownia, Dead Morris, Walker, and Vortmann—each of which contributes to the wine's depth and character. These specific sites offer subtle variations in soil composition and vine age, adding layers of complexity and ensuring that the wine captures the essence of Coonawarra's terroir.

Winemaking

Balnaves' Cabernet Sauvignon is produced from **100% Cabernet Sauvignon** grapes, harvested at peak ripeness. The winemaking process begins with a **10-day fermentation**, followed by an extended **16-day maceration on skins**, which enhances the wine's structure and develops its tannic profile. This approach captures the rich black fruit character of Cabernet while integrating fine tannins for a balanced and elegant mouthfeel.

The wine is then aged for **14 months in French oak barriques**, with **44% new oak** from premium, tight-grained barrels. This careful oak selection contributes a delicate layer of complexity without overshadowing the wine's vibrant fruit profile. The final wine is lightly fined with egg whites for clarity and to polish its texture, resulting in a Cabernet Sauvignon that showcases richness, elegance, and excellent aging potential.

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Tasting Notes

- **Color**: Deep, vibrant purple with garnet reflections, signaling concentration and youth.
- **Aroma**: Aromas of cassis, blackberry, and blackcurrant layered with subtle notes of licorice, coffee, and hints of oak.
- **Palate**: Full-bodied and plush, with flavors of dark fruits, fine-grained tannins, and a long, balanced finish that reveals hints of dark chocolate and a touch of earthiness.

Did You Know?

The **Balnaves family** has been growing grapes in Coonawarra since **1975**, with a particular focus on Cabernet Sauvignon, which now makes up **70% of their vineyard plantings**. Balnaves has established a reputation for high-quality, terroir-driven wines that are true to the unique characteristics of the Coonawarra region.

Wine Pairing Ideas

- **Lamb Rack with Rosemary and Garlic**: The wine's tannins and dark fruit complement the richness and herbs of lamb.
- **Beef Bourguignon**: This classic dish's depth matches the structure and complexity of the wine.
- **Aged Gouda**: The wine's intensity and tannins pair well with the nutty flavors of aged Gouda.
- **Grilled Portobello Mushrooms**: The earthy mushroom flavors resonate with the wine's depth and minerality.

96 James Halliday

James Halliday (JH) : 96 Points (2018)

With a vibrant hue and lifted violet perfume, the palate shows intense mulberry fruit. This plush fruit is beautifully balanced with subtle, smoky French oak and complex, chewy tannins

92

Robert Parker (RP) : 92 Points (2018)

The 2018 Cabernet Sauvignon is structural and savory, with a core of purple berry fruit. Layers of tannins wrap around the fruit, making for a firm, savory style of Cabernet Sauvignon—one that will age gracefully.